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"Connecting Communities"

Post-Conference Issue



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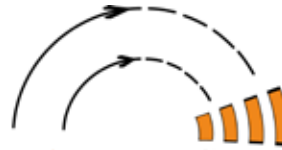
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As the journal of the Alliance for Community Media, Community Media Review shall support the Alliance mission by providing: a comprehensive overview of past, present and future issues critical to the Alliance and its membership; vigorous and thoughtful debate on those issues; and a venue for members and like-minded groups to present issues critical to the Alliance.

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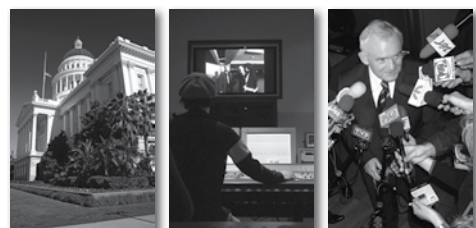


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All That I Have Met ...

by Anthony Riddle

*I am a part of all that I
have met.*

Alfred Tennyson

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY IS GREAT! But it sure is good to be around everyone once in a while.

I heard from others confirmation of what I felt myself: It is even greater to actually see the faces that go with the names and the voices and the emails. It was so absolutely necessary after a roller-coaster year of ups and downs. It was a time to refuel, refresh and redirect.

A word of thanks really needs to be offered to our hosts for the clear success of the conference. The workshops focused on a host of new issues – political and technical – and encouraged highly spirited debate.

Personally, I found it interesting to see the tremendous progress we've made since the last conference, both in terms of our understanding the legislative process and our ability to act in organized fashion. It really is an accumulative process – we gain recognition because we act, locally and nationally. We become more sophisticated in our analysis as we act.

*The strongest bond of human
sympathy outside the family
relation should be one uniting
working people of all nations
and tongues and kindreds.*

Abraham Lincoln

We should keep this sense of shifting need in mind as we plan the 2007 conference for the Twin Cities. Can we foresee the political landscape? Where do our centers and members need to be technically? What critical alliances with other organizations

can be enhanced by the way we organize our meeting? Should we be looking at new ways to organize the conference itself to make better use of time and the presence of so many brilliant minds?

Is there a way to program the conference so that it not only is a sharing of information, but ends with a formal framework for actions going forward? Can we combine a conference with a convention?

These are some of the questions the conference planners will work through. In this sense, who we are when we come together as a group, where, and what we find important enough to talk about when we are there – these are the things that reveal what we intend for the year to come. Bear in mind that our conference planners come from within our membership. We must constantly reshape these meetings. The Alliance conference is a physical act of self-definition. Even as we go forward into cyber-space, we must never underestimate the importance of the physical community:

Our spirits rejoice to be with one another. **CMR**

This is the duty of our generation as we enter the twenty-first century – solidarity with the weak, the persecuted, the lonely, the sick, and those in despair. It is expressed by the desire to give a noble and humanizing meaning to a community in which all members will define themselves not by their own identity but by that of others.

Elie Wiesel



Anthony Riddle is the executive director of the Alliance for Community Media.

Anthony can be reached at raiseeveryvoice@yahoo.com

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Ahoy-Hoy!

by Mike Wassenaar

THE 2006 ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNITY MEDIA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW IN BOSTON was remarkable for a host of reasons.

First, the sheer number of community media centers in the Northeastern United States meant the gathering collected a wide variety of types and sizes of organizations practicing community media work. As a result, the four days of the conference provided a unique opportunity to observe and learn best practices in community media, not just for one type of media center, but for many.

Next, the conference focused on key areas of media technology and practice that are evolving as we speak, and promise to change many aspects of many community media centers. The promise of open source and distributed programs in our industry is great, if only for the economic impact that these programs and practices could have on the development of our communities.

Next, the conference came at a time when community media is politically at a crossroads in the United States. There is no better place to talk about political choices and the value of speech than in Boston, the cradle of our democracy. Sometimes people focus on the tourist aspects of a summertime visit to Boston, whether it's the Red Sox, the fireworks, the scrod or the Yankee pot roast. Well, Boston is a reminder for me that history is made and lived, rather than handed to us by other people. It's an extremely important reminder as we fight at the local, state and federal level for the protection and promotion of community media.

And finally, what a pleasure it was to listen to keynote speakers Shelly Palmer of Palmer Advanced Media and Jack Stanley of the Thomas Edison Menlo Park Museum talk about the present future and past future of media technology! A particular delight for me was Stanley talking about how Thomas Edison invented many of the ways we think about modern life today. Think about that the next time you say "Hello" instead of "Ahoy-Hoy" to a telemarketer ...

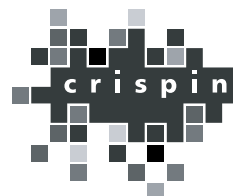
So it was a remarkable conference, and it's a treat to see highlights compiled here by Margie Nicholson, the Community Media Review staff, and members of the Alliance for Community Media who attended and gave presentations in Boston. Thank you!

It almost makes me want to go to Minneapolis in 2007 ... **cMr**



Mike Wassenaar is the executive director of Saint Paul Neighborhood Network, and is the chair of the national board of the Alliance for Community Media.

Mike can be reached at wassenaar@spnn.org



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Connecting Communities

by Margie Nicholson

THIS ISSUE OF COMMUNITY MEDIA REVIEW celebrates the Alliance for Community Media's 30th annual conference and trade show, CONNECTING COMMUNITIES, which was held from July 5–8 at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel.

Highlights? There were many. James Horwood told stories about making new friends and connections with legislators on Capitol Hill. Chicago Access Network's Barbara Popovic provided an update on the activities of the Alliance for Communications Democracy. Organizers from successful statewide organizations in New Jersey, Wisconsin, and Massachusetts offered advice for starting up similar networks in other states.

Curtis Henderson, executive director of Boston Neighborhood Network, talked about the strategy behind the multi-million dollar capital campaign for BNN's new facility. Media consultant Rika Welsh and Laurie Cirivello from Grand Rapids' Community Media Center shared savvy strategies for working with boards of directors. Ron Cooper from Access Sacramento and Deb Vinsel from Thurston Community Television contributed ideas about new sources of revenue. The conference was full of cable access managers with 10, 20 and 30 years of experience swapping ideas with enthusiastic new media activists who were eagerly launching projects.

The Hometown Awards Ceremony showcased hundreds of community programs, recognized long-time leaders Sam Behrend from Access Tucson and Sean McLaughlin from Access Humboldt, and celebrated the contributions of Edmund Broussard, a volunteer from Berkeley Community Media.

Josh Goding told the Midwest Regional Caucus about the night that Iowa City's public access channel carried the only live community service programming when the town was hit by a tornado. An-

drew Lynn, Derrick Dawkins and Mariela Rosario shared ideas about peer-to-peer media literacy training at Manhattan Neighborhood Network's Youth Channel. Marty Lucas from the Center for Social Media at American University gave examples of effective civic engagement and citizen participation projects.

The conference was, in a word, inspiring. The stories we shared reminded us of our common commitment to help people communicate and to connect communities. It's not about making a deal with Hollywood, it's about showcasing citizens, issues and needs. It's not about reaching the masses with one-size-fits-all programming or creating, to borrow a phrase from Fred Johnson, "placeless channels," it's about celebrating localism. It's not about developing channels and programs that are megaphones for corporate interests, it's about encouraging diversity, debate and discussion. It's not about branding media with a political ideology, it's about inviting political leaders to communicate with their constituents – and vice versa – using these valuable channels.

Thirty self-selected "citizen journalists" volunteered to cover the conference in order to create this post-conference reflection. They wrote in their own words and style, reporting on events as they experienced them. While we didn't have room for all of our reports, nor did we have volunteers for each conference session, we feel we were able to compile enough material to give those who couldn't attend a flavor for what went on, and a snapshot of this unique time in our history.

You can find more information by visiting the CMR website (community-mediareview.org) and by contacting the presenters and reporters who contributed their ideas to the conference and to this issue. **CMR**



Margie Nicholson is a tenured faculty member in the Arts, Entertainment and Media Management Department at Columbia College Chicago. She launched Chicago's CAN-TV Network, managed the program of support for media centers at the MacArthur Foundation, and has served on grant review panels for the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Department of Commerce's Technology Opportunities Program. She is a former board member and chair of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers, and is currently a board member of the International Leadership Association and chair of that organization's global conference, Leadership at the Crossroads, which will be held in Chicago in November 2006.

Margie can be reached at mnicholson@colum.edu

Sam Behrend Honored with George Stoney Award

Sam Behrend can be reached at sam@access-tucson.org

THE GEORGE STONEY AWARD for Humanistic Communications for 2006 was presented to Sam Behrend, executive director of Access Tucson. The Stoney Award is given annually to an organization or individual that has made an outstanding contribution to championing the growth and experience of humanistic communications.

George Stoney is a 90-year old media activist whose passion has been using media and technology to foster social justice and activism. Stoney was instrumental in getting the Federal Communications Commission to mandate that cable operators provide channels and support for public access. He has been a powerful force in the community access media movement for decades and founded the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (NFLCP) in 1976.

As a recognized leader in the community media field for more than 25 years, Behrend has been a driving force to keep public, educational and governmental (PEG) channels available in Southern Arizona. Under his leadership, Access Tucson created revolutionary facilities management software that is used by other PEG providers nationwide, and was the first to produce the national program *Democracy Now!* live via satellite.

In accepting the award, Behrend talked about following in the footsteps of George Stoney and finding his passion for “humanistic communications”:

IN 1957, MY BROTHER AND I sat in the peanut gallery of the *Howdy Doody Show* at NBC in New York. Fast forward 16 years.

In January 1973, at the age of 22, I took my life savings of \$1200 and bought a Sony Videorecorder II – the original portapak. I really didn’t know what I was going to do with it – just try to save the world or something silly like that – but I had been reading GUERRILLA TELEVISION and the *Spaghetti City Video* manual, and all about the Videofreex. I knew I was going to be a part of that movement.

Within a few weeks, I wandered into Mt. Lebanon Cable TV in a suburb outside of Pittsburgh and started volunteering on the crew to produce local community programs. I met Jim Thomas, who was directing a talk show and who I still work with today, and I met Richard Emenecker, who was producing cable programs with Catholic high school kids. Within two years, Richard and I were serving on a city council committee and writing the cable ordinance and RFP for the City of Pittsburgh, which included a very progressive plan for access; we called it “community communications.” I think we thought we invented something there.

Fast forward 10 years to May 1983. I had moved to Tucson and was planning an NFLCP regional conference. We invited George Stoney, who became my houseguest for a few days. George and I visited the Cox public access studios where we compared notes on how everything they were doing was wrong and how it really ought to be if we were running public access the right way in Tucson. George thought we ought to forget about traditional studios and control rooms. Instead there should just be a “living room” with a bunch of comfy sofas, where people in front of and behind the cameras just sort of hung out and worked together to make access shows. That sounded pretty good at the time, but as I was recently quoted in that very fabulous CMR issue about



Sam Behrend and George Stoney

the future of access, George wasn't right about everything. Most things!

Anyhow, now here we are all together – 23 years after George did hundreds of sit-ups on my living room floor and 33 years after I first threaded my portapack – together again for the annual meeting of our tribe. We celebrate each other and the work we do in community media – and I do like the name of this award – Stoney! But I love that it is called “humanistic communications.” That is the endeavor we are all engaged in.

There are so many people who ought to be accepting this recognition instead of me. Kari Peterson should be up here. Barb

Popovic should be up here. And Jim Thomas, who has been on the front lines working with community producers for over 33 years, should be up here accepting this award. All of you in this historic hall should. Because in our movement we are all engaged in the noble pursuit of fulfilling the promise to save the world or something silly like that. I accept this for all of you and I salute you. Thank you, Alliance. Support our Alliance! **cMr**

“I do like the name of this award – Stoney! I love that it is called ‘humanistic communications.’ That is the endeavor we are all engaged in.”

Local Voices Matter

[Prepared remarks of Sean McLaughlin for the occasion of receiving the Buske Leadership Award. The Buske Leadership Award is given annually to recognize a person who has provided leadership at the local, regional and national levels of the Alliance. The Award is named for Sue Miller Buske, the founding executive director of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers.]

THERE IS A BASIC HUMAN NEED to be heard. It is a universal aspect of human nature that belongs to each individual of every culture and heritage. You could say it defines the essential spirit of our species. Whatever language we speak, whichever belief we hold true, the deepest expression of our selves is our own voice – our own stories.

This is why community media is so important. By providing the means of free expression with the least possible restriction, we are empowering people to speak their hearts and minds. Starting with the power of one and reaching first to our families, friends and neighbors, we learn to bridge the differences that separate us as people from one another.

We can see the oppression of silence around the world, and in our own communities. People who are silenced suffer greatly, and that suffering is the cause of

great violence that harms us all. Silence is the root of terror.

Given the freedom to speak our minds, some of us will express ourselves through visualization, others with music, poetry or thoughtful dissertations; the range of human experience and intelligence is beyond simple comprehension. Sometimes it may sound childish or innocent, and other times cynical or senile. But whether we sound rough, grating and foolish, or smooth, wise and uplifting, every voice matters.

By having our voices heard, we are all given a place in the light to share our own unique vision. The collective wisdom of all our voices reflects the spirit of humanity and gives our life a higher purpose.

Community media matters because we are empowering local voices.

As one of my heroes, Martin Luther King Jr., said, “Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”

So we must speak about the work that we are doing, and we must stand up for free access to media for everyone – because it matters.

Thanks to all those who have made the Alliance for Community Media the center of a worldwide movement. And thank you for hearing my voice today. **cMr**

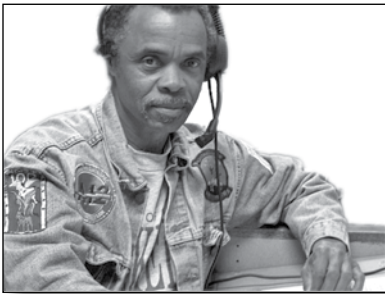


Sean McLaughlin is the public policy chair for the Alliance for Community Media, and executive director of Access Humboldt in Eureka, CA.

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The 2006 Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity Recipient: Edmund Broussard

Reporter **Sapna Shahani** is the development manager at Berkeley Community Media in Berkeley, CA. Sapna can be reached at sapna@betv.org



Edmund Broussard

MOST VIEWERS of Berkeley Community Media are not aware of the generous volunteers who make many of the locally-originated community programs. Retired aviator Edmund Broussard has been an active producer since the late 1990s. He is by far the most prolific community media producer in Berkeley, having aired over 500 shows, and counting. To acknowledge his valuable contributions as a community media producer, Berkeley Community Media development manager Sapna Shahani nominated Broussard for the 2006 Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity.

The award is one of three leadership awards and is “given annually to those persons who show an outstanding contribution to a process that encourages, facilitates, or creates culturally diverse and/or non-mainstream community involvement in the field of community media.” Broussard was overjoyed about the national honor, but was unable to attend the awards ceremony in Boston on July 6, due to a back injury caused by moving studio furniture. The ceremony was held in historic Faneuil Hall, where the ideals of freedom of speech in Amer-

ica were first discussed. In his recorded acceptance speech, Broussard underlined the importance of having an accessible community media center and said that he was glad to spend time doing what he loved and giving back to the community.

Broussard has showcased the accomplishments of hundreds and thousands of high school children on cable TV. His series include Berkeley High School basketball and football coverage for girls and boys, Afro-Haitian dance performances, and *Gospel Search*, featuring gospel singers and choirs. Broussard produces a studio series, *Education in our Community*, and is an avid member of a producers’ collective, Video Feedback, that organizes studio discussions of nonprofit and community issues.

Because of his prolific production schedule, Berkeley Community Media awarded Broussard with his own key to the station so that he could edit and dub at his convenience during closed hours. He is widely known in the local access community as a patient, helpful and inspiring producer and director, who richly deserves this national recognition. **CMR**

The 29th Annual Hometown Awards

The 29th Annual Hometown Awards received an astonishing 1300 entries this year. Non-professional, professional, and youth producers received 128 awards in 41 categories. There were 67 judging sites around the United States, with more than 300 volunteer judges participating.

Thurston Community Television has been the managing agency for the Hometown Video Awards since

2003. Deborah Vinsel, Hometown coordinator, was assisted this year by volunteer extraordinaire, Dan Bennett, who provided more than 100 hours of staff support to the Hometown awards.

For a list of 2006 award winners, visit www.alliancecm.org/index.php?page_id=7.



International Reception 2006

THE INTERNATIONAL RECEPTION at Emerson College was made possible through the generous sponsorship of the Information Division of Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Boston (TECO) – well-represented by its outgoing director, Frank Wang, and his associate, Francis Soong.

Boston Neighborhood Network's executive director Curtis Henderson welcomed visitors from around the world and recognized the many folks who helped bring the conference to "Beantown." Henderson spoke of Boston's history and role in freedom struggles of the past and present, and how community media makers are shaping a more hopeful future for all. He then introduced Armando Silva, Community Advocate Office of New Bostonians, Giles Li of the Asian Community Development Association, and Charlot Lucien of the long-running public access TV program *Tele-Kreyol*. Each of these special guests talked about the many ways that their communities benefit from public access TV programs.

Anthony Riddle, executive director the Alliance for Community Media, introduced Ruud de Bruin, a representative from OLON (Dutch Federation of Local Public Broadcasters) and a friend to many in the community media movement worldwide. Riddle then introduced the featured speak-

er of the evening, the founder and president of Search for Common Ground. "For 25 years, John Marks has been using the tools of community media to resolve conflict and bring reconciliation among ethnic groups in places like Liberia, Sierra Leone, Macedonia, and the Gaza Strip," said Riddle. "But Search for Common Ground is really about bringing hope to people who have known only despair, and teaching peace to communities who have known only war. John Marks' work is an inspiration to all of us in the Alliance."

Marks then took the stage and entranced the crowd by mixing dramatic video clips and personal testimony to remind everyone of just how powerful mass media can be in changing public attitudes toward armed and ethnic conflict around the world.

Marks finished his presentation with clips from *The Shape of the Future* – a television documentary co-produced by Israelis and Palestinians that showed what a peace settlement could look like from both of their perspectives. As the official reception wound down, Marks was soon surrounded by dozens of people asking for more information about SFCG programs and complimenting him for his courageous work. **CMR**

Reporter **Jeff Hansell** is the executive director of Belmont Media Center in Belmont, MA.

Jeff can be reached at jeffrey.hansell@belmont-media.org

Search for Common Ground



John Marks

Search for Common Ground is considering offering a selection of its video programs exclusively to Alliance members free or very low cost. If your media center is interested, please send a message to Jeff Hansell at access@belmontmedia.org. If and when these programs become available, information will be posted on the Alliance website. For more information about SFCG, go to www.sfcg.org.

Conference Keynotes Deconstruct the Impact of Technology on Culture

Reporter **Richard J. Desimone** is the station manager of MEtv Metuchen, NJ.

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WHILE WE THINK OF OURSELVES as living in a time of rapid, unprecedented technological change, attendees at the keynote luncheon were reminded that more than 100 years ago, Thomas Edison was patenting inventions at a rate of about one per week. These inventions changed the way people perceived their world in much the same way that broadband media and internet communities are changing our culture today. The cultural impacts of technological change – past, present, and future – were the focus of the 2006 conference keynote speakers Shelly Palmer and Jack Stanley.

Shelly Palmer is the author of *TELEVISION DISRUPTED: THE TRANSITION FROM NETWORK TO NETWORKED TV*, which discusses the technological, economic and social forces that are shaping the future of

television, media, and entertainment. An innovative pioneer in television technology, Palmer is the host of *Media 3.0 with Shelly Palmer*, a public television and online weekly business series, and writes a popular television business blog, www.EmmyAdvancedMedia.com, read by over 40,000 people daily. He is

the managing director of Advanced Media Ventures Group, LLC and chairman of The Advanced Media Committee of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (NATAS), the organization that produces the Emmy® Awards.

Jack Stanley is the director of the Thomas A. Edison Tower and Menlo Park Museum, the spot where Edison had his laboratory and the first modern research and development center in the world. Stanley has done extensive research on Edison including interviews with Theodore Edison (Thomas Edison's youngest son) and reading Edison's books. He has appeared on The History Channel, *CBS Good Morning*,

ABC News with Peter Jennings, *NBC News*, *PBS*, and *Discovery* (representing Thomas Edison on *The 100 Greatest Americans*), and has also been interviewed for programs on Edison in Germany, Japan, Russia, Korea and China. Stanley has served as a historical consultant for many books, magazine articles, and television programs. He is a sought after speaker at colleges, museums and historic functions.

Taking a closer look at industry buzz-words

No stranger to controversial opinions, Shelly Palmer used entertaining anecdotes to challenge the audience to keep up with the present and envision the future of television and access. As video technology is evolving, no one really knows exactly what the shape of media will be, but trends in collaboration and communities of interest, as seen in the rapid growth and market dominance of MySpace.com, seem to be leading the way. The internet provides the opportunity to network all like-minded groups together, with a personalized experience for viewers on any screens they choose, via iPod™ (podcast), RSS feed (the technology that is used for blogging), mobile devices (phones, smart phones, PDAs), computer monitors, or television.

Palmer deconstructed and demystified the language of technology. For example, while the industry speaks of replacing traditional television with on-demand user-defined content, according to Palmer, network/broadcast television will not easily be replaced by networked or on-demand television because it may not be possible for everyone to download the same thing at the same time.

How is net neutrality like no child left behind?

According to Palmer, "net neutrality" is one of those terms designed to make anyone against it look bad, much like coming



Shelly Palmer

out against “No Child Left Behind” makes it sound as if you are against education. However, when the term is more closely examined, there is more complexity than it would seem at first. Telecom companies say the net is not free and there is precedence for different classes of service in providing voice and data (for example, private T1 trunking). Palmer quoted Bill Gates as saying, “I have no idea what net neutrality is, but I’m against it.”

Access stations are the real content providers

Throughout the communications industry, service providers claim that they are in the content business, but Palmer believes that traditional network/broadcast providers are actually in the business of providing viewers to advertisers. Palmer said, “Access is one of the few outlets truly in the content business. Access stations create communities of interest around the station and have a commitment to creative programming. But, access also needs to transition from a one-to-many model to a one-to-one relationship with viewers. It’s important for access to master the existing and emerging technologies and find creative ways to provide desirable content to its constituencies. And, even more importantly, access stations need to be sure they understand and define their communities of interest and the form factor [media] appropriate for those communities.”

Thomas Edison: inventor and marketer

Jack Stanley demonstrated to the audience that there is a lot we can learn about today’s emerging networked culture from Thomas Alva Edison. Stanley is one of the world’s leading authorities on Edison, sound recording, and technology of the early 20th century. Edison was a great inventor and he also understood the power of marketing.

While electricity and lighting systems existed prior to Edison’s development of the electric light, it was Edison who sold and enabled a network of electric lighting and power. He understood how to tie technology together and make it useful to communities of interest. He invented new classes of technology, and he understood

how to sell them as user-friendly media.

For example, Alexander Graham Bell invented a telephone that was very difficult to use. The same apparatus was used to listen and to speak and it was very difficult to understand what was being said. Edison invented the carbon button transmitter which drastically improved telegraph and telephone technology. He also created a social context for using the telephone by inventing the word “hello” as a telephone greeting. Unlike Bell, Edison understood how inventions could be used by people and how to sell people on new ideas.

Among the 400 patents for discoveries at Edison’s Menlo Park labs are the incandescent light bulb, the phonograph, the electric railroad, wireless transmissions (nearly 20 years before Marconi), the Edison Effect (the foundation for the field of electronics), and other innovations that are still having an impact on how people live. He was, essentially, the first media giant and creator of the first networks.

Lessons from another era

Today, we think of the internet as being a force for social change, but Edison understood that it was not just technology or new networks that create change, but also ideas about how new technology can be used and sold. Long after he ceased being a prolific inventor, Edison continued to cultivate a great inventor image as the face of his company, much like Walt Disney and Bill Gates provide a personification of their businesses. According to Edison, “Success is 50 percent business and 50 percent show business.”

George Santayana said, “Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” It was easy for the audience to connect Shelly Palmer’s discussion of 21st Century innovation with Jack Stanley’s discussion of Edison’s 19th Century innovation. These provocative, engaging, and entertaining speakers provided information about past and present technology and business models that can help illuminate our path to the future. **CMR**



Jack Stanley

Nolan Bowie Joins the Equal Opportunity Caucus For A Lunchtime Chat

Reporter **Michael Weisman** is the policy advisor to Reclaim the Media. Michael can be reached at popeye@speakeasy.net

RECLAIM THE MEDIA, in partnership with the Alliance for Community Media's Equal Opportunity Caucus, hosted a luncheon conversation with Nolan Bowie. Bowie is known for his expertise in communications law and policy; he is a frequent public speaker on media policy. We invited Bowie to help us start a discussion about new policy paradigms for community media, drawing on his exceptional talents as a futurist and avuncular conversationalist.

The small group consisted of invited participants, self-invited participants, and curiosity seekers who sensed something unusual. Karen Toering, co-director, Reclaim the Media, introduced Bowie, who quickly began spinning our thinking about the future of community media in a ninety-minute conversation that seemed too short.

Considering recent efforts at telecom reform, Bowie reminded us to think about common carriage. Common carriage is an ancient doctrine, not a new

one, and originally applied to roads and ferries. The basis of common carriage is non-discrimination, and non-discrimination must be the basis of telecom reform, in his opinion, if we are to preserve the tradition of common carriage that has lead to the incredible development of the communications network.

Broadcasting and buggy whips

Change in the communications industry is inevitable, says Bowie, and no one should be so presumptuous as to stand in the way. At the turn of the century, he said, people bemoaned the end of the buggy whip manufacturers when cars began to replace horse-drawn carriages. But

the concern was misplaced; the end of the buggy whip was as inevitable as the end of the horse-drawn carriage, and there was no turning back.

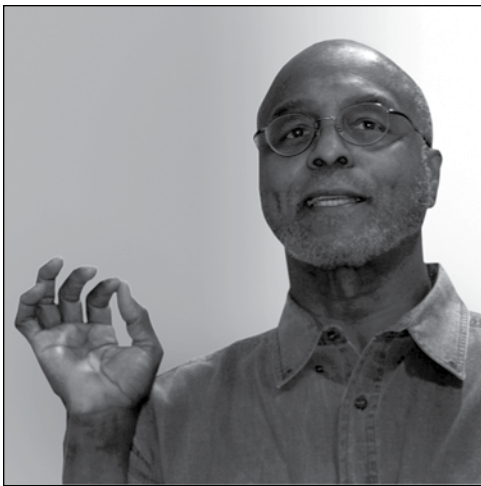
Digital convergence, the internet, and other changes mean that the broadcasting business is also headed for change, and there is no turning back. Like the buggy whip, there will be changes that we cannot avoid, and sentimental concern for some of the old-fashioned and comfortable aspects of the old paradigm are not worth the bother. Bowie encouraged us to look forward, not back, and leave our mental buggy whips behind.

The message for community media is to let go of the comfortable reliance on the old broadcasting industry models. Although the broadcasting companies will continue to be around, the future of community media will be independent of these dinosaurs.

The future of IT

Bowie says that in the future people following the information technology industry must be "hyper-adaptive." Trends will continue to change, and the frequency of major changes will speed up; the message for community media is to adapt to change by continually seeking to keep up and ride the wave. Bowie referenced a recurring theme in his talk: community media must adapt to new challenges to remain relevant and to serve its important goals of bringing overlooked voices to a wider audience. Relying on old technology, and old ways of thinking, will leave the community media movement out of touch and irrelevant.

"What is our time horizon?" Bowie asked the group to think about how we plan our future. Are we thinking many years out, or in terms of months? With a hyper-adaptive IT sector, and new challenges and opportunities appearing and disappearing all the time, community



Nolan Bowie is adjunct lecturer in the Information Infrastructure Project at the Kennedy School of Government. He served as assistant special prosecutor with the Watergate Special Prosecution Force and as assistant attorney general in the Civil Rights Bureau of the New York State Department of Law. He received his law degree from the University of Michigan Law School in 1973.

media organizations will have to think about how to adapt to short, shifting time horizons.

The future will bring a Global Knowledge Economy, says Bowie. It follows that community media will have to find a way to exist in this new environment. What does 'local' mean anymore? What is the audience for a local community media center in this new milieu? How does a local community media center contend with a global audience?

Our conversation with Nolan Bowie contained more questions than answers. As a teacher and futurist, Bowie put the issues before us and challenged us to think in new ways about the role of community media.

The interests of the community

Bowie was asked what a new communications framework would look like that incorporated the values he sketched for us. The first thing he mentioned was "ubiquitous broadband" – the proliferation of publicly owned or publicly accessible networks, whether wireless or not. Universal service reform, he said, should include the goal of ubiquitous high-speed broadband as an essential public service, and government has an affirmative role to play to subsidize and direct its deployment as a public good. It is a quality of life issue. Networks must include rights of interconnection between networks, and rights of access by end-user to end-users.

Communications laws should require a bandwidth set-aside for community use. There should be a community ac-

cess 'license' that requires commercial broadcasters to meet identified public interest goals. Sydney Levy of Media Alliance gave an example from his recent experience in Venezuela. License periods should be shorter, and there should be more frequent auditing and enforcement of public interest requirements. Bowie noted that the United States once had many of these requirements, but they were eliminated by the Reagan administration. Today, there is virtually no accountability, he said.

Community media advocates must be able to describe a new philosophy of media based on the new emerging landscape described in Bowie's talk. In Toering's words, they must "be the media they want to see." Accountability is imposed on community media, but not on the commercial sector that uses the public space. We must find ways to bridge the interests between different elements in the media policy movement. We must decide what we want and negotiate from strength, not from weakness.

Finally, what we mobilize around is the commons, according to Bowie. Bowie says we worship private property, and that is how the debate in Washington is framed. You can't have "E-democracy" and "E-government" unless E-everyone has high-speed broadband connectivity. **CMR**

“The long term policy-making question is this: ‘What kind of society do we want?’ Who will make the economic, social and political decisions? If we want democratic outcomes, we need a democratic process. We need to have open debates and conversations.”

“Bowie referenced a recurring theme in his talk: Community media must adapt to new challenges to remain relevant and to serve its important goals of bringing overlooked voices to a wider audience.”

Emerging Media Track Overview

Track organizer **Susan Fleischmann** is executive director, and reporter **Jason Crow** is access coordinator, of Cambridge Community Television in Cambridge, MA.

Susan can be reached at susan@cctvcambridge.org, and Jason can be reached at jason@cctvcambridge.org.

Projects of Note

The Emerging Media Track panels were populated by innovators in the field of media on the internet and online community building.

To see a list of these cutting-edge projects, go to communitymediareview.org and follow the links to **Jason Crow's** article in the CMR archive.

THE CHALLENGE
The Emerging Media track challenged media centers all over the country to re-envision the way they do business in an attempt to keep up with the blistering pace of technological and policy change in the telecommunications industry. When organizing the Emerging Media track (EMT), we were determined to address the many challenges that community media centers face as they shift from an analog world to the digital world. To spark meaningful dialogue on these challenges, the EMT brought in experts from all over the country to present new tools, share information, and promote collaboration. We focused our energy on discussing the following core concepts:

- The continued relevance of the mission of public access;
- Access centers serving as trusted aggregators of social media;
- Use of bandwidth in the public interest.

Demonstrating the power in new technologies

To illustrate that the EMT was going to be more than just talk, EMT organizers created two forums – a virtual space and real space – to demonstrate the power of new technologies. First is acmboston.org, a Drupal-based content management system. Community professionals unable to attend the conference, as well as conference attendees, can visit the site and download archived presentations, interact with other centers all over the country, and watch video interviews with presenters and others. Dynamically updated throughout the conference by several authors, the site had, at any given time, more than a hundred guests and dozens of registered users. The conference is over and the site continues to receive significant traffic from those interested in downloading workshop presentations, posting queries, and watching the many interviews posted on the video blog by RYANNE HODSON, the official conference vlogger.

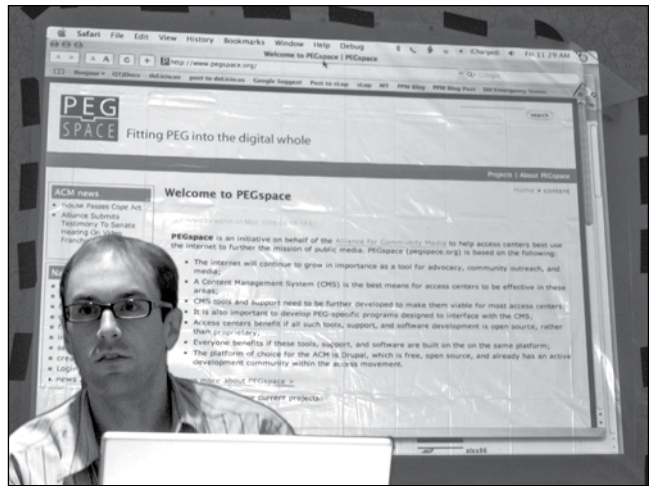
In addition, the EMT organizers created the *Q&A Tech Bar*. Like Apple's Genius Bar, people could stop by to get technical questions answered or visit a particular presentation scheduled throughout the conference. The idea of the Tech Bar was born from the desire to provide an alternative forum for those specific and personal questions that can bog down any workshop, such as: "I use the Pioneer DV-F07 DVD carousel, will that work with the Princeton Server Group box?" Tech Bar presentations included: web streaming from your control room; podcasting and videoblogging; the Drupal content management system; Project for Open Source Media and the Digital Bicycle; and digital playback for cable channels.



Barbara Popovic (CAN-TV) leads a break-out group in the Community Media Culture: Trends and Emerging Practices in Community Media workshop

Lessons learned

The conference is over and a hundred photos and a dozen videos are up on acmboston.org. The future of community television is still up in the air. However, one thing is certain: Community media centers need to embrace new technologies and the culture of collaboration, and see what lessons can be learned from social networking, video sharing and media production sites like Current TV, MySpace and YouTube. So, participate in PEGspace (pegspace.org), contribute to the Deproduction wiki (deproduction.org/collaborate), or start your own videoblog. **CMR**



Jacob Redding (MNN) on the panel of the Digital Content Distribution for the Access Center workshop.

Connect the Bits: A Primer on Public Access and Digital Technology

CONNECT THE BITS: A PRIMER ON PUBLIC ACCESS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY was delivered by Daniell Krawczyk, who has worked at the Grand Rapids Community Media Center and Lowell Telecommunications Center in Lowell, Massachusetts; Kenyatta Cheese, who previously worked at the Manhattan Neighborhood Network and now works at the Eyebeam Center for Art and Technology; and Jay Dedman, who also worked at MNN and now is involved with Node 101.

According to the presenters, while we think we have “two worlds” of community media – one institutional, sanctioned by a government entity, and professionally organized, the other consisting of decentralized, ad hoc groups of individuals working online through collective action – this divide is artificial, and the key to success is to recognize the virtues of each process and find ways to compensate for their shortcomings.

With the advances in media distribution technology, we’ve seen an explosion in the amount of community-produced video (or “user-generated content”) being shared online. This is a movement that needs to be

leveraged by public access centers. While much of this content doesn’t fit into the “30/60/120” minute programming blocks of traditional cablecast, centers should consider adapting their policies and procedures to the content. Shorter 5–10 minute programs can be strung together into longer theme blocks curated by access center staff or by your constituents in a “favorites of” playlist. Because much of the video being shared is distributed under open content licenses, like those available through Creative Commons (www.creativecommons.org), content can often be repurposed for non-commercial cablecast without having to obtain expressed written permission by the original authors.

Krawczyk discussed the Digital Bicycle (digitalbicycle.org) project which takes advantage of openly-shared media to “bicycle” programming between public access centers via digital media sharing technologies like BitTorrent and RSS. By providing a set of standards and procedures for sharing content, the Digital Bicycle program “hopes to simplify collaboration and cable access syndication.”

Reporter **Kenyatta Cheese** works with Eyebeam Center for Art and Technology. Kenyatta can be reached at kenyatta@eyebeam.org



Connecting the Bits (l to r): Jay Dedman, Daniell Krawczyk, and Kenyatta Cheese

A similar project from the field of community and public radio is the Public Radio Exchange (www.prx.org). On hand at the workshop, PRX project director, Steve Schultze, explained how the site was created as an online marketplace for independent radio producers to make their work available to community radio. Producers are paid by the community radio stations that air their work, and users of all kinds can go online to rate programs and give feedback.


Where Digital Bicycle and PRX provide a bridge between producers and offline distribution, Jay Dedman explained Node 101 (www.node101.org) as “public access online” where individuals produce programming at home and share it online. They even teach each other their techniques by producing tutorials and posting them to the web – see Freevlog (www.freevlog.org) as an example. While much of Node 101’s work happens online through user groups and online forums, they also have physical meet ups where they build community and work on projects. Recognizing the resources available through community media, many Node 101 local nodes choose to meet at their neighborhood public access center.

With more people producing shows at home, there comes the potential to free up more of an access center’s staff and equipment resources for those who need them the most. While more middle class households may own the equipment needed to produce a program, a significant portion

of the population still relies on public access centers for support in the production of their content. Everyone – even those working from home – can benefit from the creative and technology expertise of the staff at a professional access center in learning how to craft an effective, well-produced program.

Along with professional expertise, access centers can use their extensive social and professional networks to help their constituents reach the one audience that’s hard to reach online – the local audience. As people form affinity groups online and begin to organize, they soon realize the need to connect their work back to their local communities. Access centers are often the best (if not the only) place where schools, nonprofits, advocacy groups, unions, and local government all intersect. An access center’s staff can act as a conduit for putting the online world back in touch with the offline community.

While there seems to be a lot the public access community can offer the “Web 2.0” world, no process is without its lessons. One of the key things we can learn from online media is the effect of simplifying your registration and orientation processes. While many online content license agreements have been reduced to a single page with a one-click opt-in, public access programming agreements continue to be multi-paged legal jungles that add unnecessary friction to the registration process. Examining and simplifying your existing processes can be beneficial to both users and staff and lead to more involvement in your center.

Likewise, the benefits of making user content available online through “free” video sharing services are too great to be ignored by the public access producer community. Videoblogging (or “video podcasts”) form a virtual “do-it-yourself video-on-demand” network that forms a nice compliment to local cablecast. While many programs are best presented live (interactive call-in shows, town hall meetings, sporting events), some shows may find greater effectiveness by making themselves available through video sharing services like YouTube (www.youtube.com) and blip.tv (www.blip.tv) 

“Access centers are often the best (if not the only) place where schools, nonprofits, advocacy groups, unions, and local government all intersect.”

Collaborations, Outreach and Marketing Track Overview

VETERANS OF THE PEG WORLD know that the key to keeping the doors open is staying vital and connected in your community. The track *Collaborations, Outreach and Marketing* was intended to provide ideas for keeping the resource of PEG alive and well in the hearts of teachers and school administrators, nonprofit managers, city council members, users and viewers.

In the session on creating partnerships with schools, for example, Don Pollock (LaVerne Community TV) and J. Robertson (Ho'ike Kauai Community TV) offered some great suggestions about how to creatively program the Educational Access Channel:

- Try identifying that one teacher who is excited about the possible collaborations with the media center. Nurture the relationship, and watch the programming roll in.

- Go after grants in collaboration with the school district so that your part-time staffers can spend more time facilitating workshops in the classroom.
- Make presentations at the district level on Staff Development Day, giving examples of how the media center can be used to help teach.
- Above all, persistence and patience pay off in partnering with educators in your community.

Other workshops dove deep into the many ways in which media centers can market themselves for next to nothing. From writing weekly columns in the local paper, to hosting mixers through the chamber of commerce, to getting billboards posted “on the cheap,” access centers don’t let the almighty dollar stop them from outreach efforts. Access centers just keep getting more creative! **cMr**

Track organizer **Suzanne St. John-Crane** is executive director of Community Media Access Partnership (CMAP) in Gilroy, CA.

Suzanne can be reached at saint@mycmap.org

Energizing Your State

OPERATE A STATION in Metuchen, New Jersey with about 4,000 subscribers, a staff of 2, and an annual operating budget of \$12,000, and yet I have enough programs to operate 24/7, enough personnel to produce a 5-camera live remote, enough technical support to maintain an all-digital station, and enough respect to communicate with local, state, county, and federal government officials. How is this possible? I am a member of the Jersey Access Group (JAG).

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts

JAG is a forum for exchanging information that promotes quality operations for New Jersey’s public, educational, and governmental (PEG) television stations. JAG was started five years ago by people at 10 stations who got together to see if they had anything in common. Today, JAG comprises 60 member stations representing 100 towns that serve more than 750,000 subscribers. We have no big centers. Only three JAG stations have more than two

Reporter **Richard J. Desimone** is station manager of MEtv in Metuchen, NJ.

Richard can be reached at metv.metuchennj@verizon.net

Wisconsin Association of PEG Channels

When a state PEG organization becomes active and committed, look out industry and political adversaries!

To learn about the Wisconsin Association of PEG Channels (WAPC) and how PEG centers in Wisconsin have improved their position by grouping together, go to communitymediareview.org and follow the links to **Connie Darling's** article in the CMR archive.

paid employees and 40 percent of JAG stations are run by volunteers. Because we run so lean, getting together with other stations and sharing information seemed like a natural solution to many of our operational problems.

When the founding stations first met, we had no idea if we had any commonalities or could help each other at all. While all of us were PEG stations, that's where our similarities seemed to end. Each of us had different levels of funding, different program development priorities, and different equipment and facilities. But after several discussions, we found our wish lists were similar. We all wanted more programs, more equipment, and more personnel. We began to see that working together we could leverage our resources and operate more efficiently.

After several more discussions, we decided to form a group. We established goals covering every aspect of PEG station operation. The essence of these goals was about sharing, assisting, and advising to improve and maintain the professional quality of our stations. Once we set our shared goals, we developed an organizational structure and resources to help us communicate and accomplish these goals.

Urban or rural, online tools bring us closer

Our members are from diverse municipalities, large and small communities, but we are in constant contact with each other via our electronic mailing list (listserv) and other online tools. The listserv allows JAG members to post job notices, keep up with industry changes, provide meeting notices, and get answers to operational questions. Our website, jagonline.org, provides information to the public and also has a section with member-specific information.

Our online database allows us to share information about budgets, staffing, salaries, formats, subscribers, franchise agreements, and station policies and procedures documents used by each member station. These have ably served as templates for new members. Sharing makes our jobs easier; for example, it takes a lot less time to edit an existing policies and procedures manual than to create one from scratch!

Partnerships with vendors and suppliers

We consider many of our vendors to be our partners. Many have demonstrated their video/station solutions at our general meetings. For vendors, this improves market acceptance of their solutions. For us, it's another way to get educated quickly and to keep pace with rapidly changing technology.

For example, when we discussed webcasting, digital operations, program sharing and distribution, and server technology, we contacted Princeton Server Group to see if they could help us understand these issues. And, when we wanted help understanding emergency support, data distribution, bulletin board control, and availability of localized information, we asked TelVue to help us understand how these issues can be addressed.

This information sharing has helped us accelerate the transformation of our stations. While we do not all use the same technology and solutions, we have all changed in ways none of us would have foreseen as individuals. Station managers are re-inventing their facilities, and vendors are re-imagining new possibilities for their products.

When we rap on the door together, it opens a lot quicker

We're realizing that together we can have an even broader local, regional, and even national impact. JAG members are featured presenters at annual state conferences – including the New Jersey League of Municipalities and the New Jersey School Board Association – where we promote how PEG stations can serve New Jersey communities. We have also consulted with emergency management teams on the role of PEG stations for emergency assistance and local and regional alerts.

As an individual station manager, I was often unable to get the attention of my cable provider. As a member of JAG, I am easily able to speak with executives from both cable and telecommunications providers. State legislators have asked us to testify at hearings and Congressional Representatives consult with us on federal franchising legislation. Before we reached out as JAG, the discussions on state video

franchise agreements in the New Jersey State Legislature had no mention of PEG stations. JAG provided a position paper to the appropriate committee and language was added to the bill that protects New Jersey's 150 PEG stations.

Sharing resources means never having to say you're sorry

There have been dozens of times that being part of a statewide consortium has proven invaluable. We're able to cover more areas and produce more content. Our *Access New Jersey* monthly magazine show is a joint effort by all JAG members and we've been able to have multi-area coverage for statewide events.

Nearly all of us have minimal technical staff and hardly any back-up equipment, but we boost our capabilities because we can borrow equipment, provide production support, and other assistance from member stations. When equipment fails just before a live broadcast, we can borrow from a nearby JAG member station. When a production requires more personnel than is available, we can count on additional production support.

Successful collaboration is the key to JAG's continued growth. We help each other with training, talent, and technical resources. As a result of all this collaboration, we're building better facilities, increasing content circulation, meeting goals quicker, and saving money.

Strong roots help the tree grow and branch out

Becoming a collective force can help stations in every state operate more efficiently and JAG can support the ACM national office quickly and effectively through its own infrastructure. While JAG works well in New Jersey, the model might need to be adjusted for other states.

When we first started, none of us knew how much we would come to know. Our PEG stations are very different, but together we help each other overcome obstacles, influence product development, solve problems, and lend a powerful voice to the future of access. We've come to realize that everyone out there – even a manager from the smallest station – has something to share. **cMr**

“Our PEG stations are very different, but together we help each other overcome obstacles, influence product development, solve problems, and lend a powerful voice to the future of access.”

Changing the Image of Access in Your Community

SUZANNE ST. JOHN-CRANE, executive director of CMAP, moderated this session with speakers Hap Freund, executive director of The Santa Barbara Channels, and Hye-Jung Park, program officer of the Media Justice Fund at the Funding Exchange.

Freund started by sharing his insights about how to break the stereotypical image of access in our communities. Access TV is sometimes called “The Wayne’s World” channel, and “that’s ok,” said Freund. Our channels do offer that type of programming, and it’s unique. Our strength is being local, having our own local channels, and showing our own local content.

Freund encouraged community media center managers to ask themselves: What do viewers like that’s already on? What

are our best productions? What are we doing to promote ourselves? If we had no restraints, what would we do to meet community needs? Who else is producing good video in our community and how can we show it on our channels? He encouraged access managers to think about – and be proactive in responding to – community needs and interests.

Mariela Rosario, the outreach coordinator from Manhattan Neighborhood Network’s Youth Channel, offered some advice and examples of how they shape the image of the Youth Channel. Their strategies include: hosting a youth film festival; attending community events to educate people about the Youth Channel’s mission and activities; and printing Youth Channel’s logo on backpacks.

Reporter **Suzanne St. John-Crane** can be reached at saint@mycmap.org

“Access managers need to get outside the four walls of their organizations, communicate with the community, and stay active in the community in order to change the image of access.”

Park described the projects that the MJF will consider supporting. Access center outreach efforts and collaborative projects have been funded in the past. She stressed the importance of building partnerships in the community and then collaborating with partners to obtain grant funds.

St. John-Crane described some strategies that have worked for her center. Shaping the programming to accurately reflect the demographics and values of the community is important. Researching and analyzing how your community gets its information, and then using those tools to get the word out about your center, is a good approach. Offering to write a regular article for the local paper is a good strategy, as local papers are often hungry for content.

Having the executive director or a staff person volunteer on community boards is a good way to help the community while educating community members about the community media center. CMAP gets a booth at every business trade show in exchange for covering the event on the channels and St. John-Crane encouraged access centers to think about the possibility of trading skills and services with local PR professionals.

An overwhelming theme ran throughout this workshop: access managers need to get outside the four walls of their organizations, communicate with the community, and stay active in the community in order to change the image of access. **CMR**

Cutting Edge Organizing Techniques from Manhattan Neighborhood Network

Reporter **Dan Villalva** is the interim executive director of the Community Media Center of Santa Rosa in Santa Rosa, CA.

Dan can be reached at dvillalva@communitymedia.org

I WALKED INTO THIS SESSION feeling somewhat anxious and I left hopeful, with a handful of tools that I could take back to my center and use to help resist the heavily funded campaigns that threaten access in California. The folks attending the session from other states were also quite interested in the information that speakers Lyell Davies and Betty Yu from Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN) had to share.

If the Save Access! slogan sounds urgent, it is! The legislative ground is shifting at light speed. What the folks at MNN found in the past year was that old-fashioned community organizing could have a tremendous effect. Davies and Yu related how they held meeting with producers at their center to inform them about pending legislation and they were surprised at how active some of their mild-mannered member producers became. They described how dozens of access supporters turned out to address the NYC council and persuaded the council to unanimously adopt a resolution in support of access.

The language in these state and federal bills is complex, so the folks at MNN de-

veloped a Save Access TV toolkit – a 14-page booklet that clearly explains the core issues using a question and answer format, with tips on local and national organizing, along with talking points for communicating with the press. The booklet is available free at saveaccess.org.

Besides the toolkit, the saveaccess.org website has a wealth of materials including video PSAs available for downloading to show on your channel. Net neutrality is one of the talking points in the toolkit and one humorous PSA explains the concept of net neutrality by likening traffic on the internet to traffic on the freeway.

Davies and Yu also showed video clips illustrating the success of their low-cost guerrilla theater protest in front of Verizon headquarters in New York City. A contingent of access supporters, with homemade cardboard cameras as props, organized a picket line and distributed leaflets, which attracted the press and resulted in several stories in local newspapers.

If you missed this great session, you can still go to the saveaccess.org website, download the materials and start spreading the word. The telcos and cable com-

panies prefer to rush legislation through, with the public kept in the dark or hearing only the company spin. By spreading the word, organizing the community, and

attracting the attention of the press using these techniques, you could be the one to save access in your state. **cMr**

Unique Marketing Ideas (on a shoestring budget)

ACCCESS ADVOCATES participated in this lively, standing-room-only workshop and shared low-cost solutions for successfully marketing PEG channels. Imagination, creativity, unique ideas, collaboration with other community groups, hard work and a willingness to use your own television station for self-promotion were stressed as more valuable than money. Dozens of successful ideas were shared, and common problems were addressed.

Marketing guru Geralyn Reardon said that 20-30% of all local news is generated by press releases. She stressed the importance of learning how to write a good press release and suggested establishing a template that you can use consistently. Reardon believes that faxing the press release is most effective, while others thought it best to send it in the body of an e-mail message. All agreed that press releases should never be sent as an e-mail attachment, because many people no longer open attachments from senders they don't know. Reardon also emphasized using "stunts" and humor in promotion efforts.

Just as each access center is unique in its structure, strengths and challenges, each person working in access has his or her own strengths. Effervescent Suzanne St. John-Crane gave examples of how she utilizes her strengths in a grassroots approach to successful marketing in the communities of Gilroy, Hollister, and San Juan Bautista, California.

St. John-Crane invests a lot of time and energy being active in other local organizations, often joining boards, partly to network but also to encourage new groups to come into the center to make videos. She shared ideas about how she negotiates and barter to get coverage in local newspapers

and radio stations and suggested that access centers offer free gifts or coupons as prizes in local media's promotional events to get more free coverage. Networking and collaborating with existing community groups, covering community events that will attract viewers (example: high school football games) and being willing to write up articles about yourself for community papers were other successful strategies she mentioned.

Hap Freund, executive director of The Santa Barbara Channels, pointed out that the most advertised product on television is ... television! Freund suggested that since access centers control a TV channel and production facilities, they should aggressively use these assets to market their own stations. Among a grocery-list of ideas he shared were: creating a downstream bug with channel logo; running on-air testimonials from viewers and local leaders; and producing self-promoting short spots and programs, "best of" programs, and local video competitions.

While most access stations don't constitute "appointment television," people often watch access channels when they are channel surfing and notice local issues and people. Access stations have the luxury of airing programs often so that interested viewers can catch repeats. We need to stress that we are community television, the panelists reminded participants, and we need to be proactive in making playback decisions and initiating programs that reflect community interests. This is what makes us unique, marketable and valuable; most of us reflect the diversity of interests in our own communities better than any other local media. This is why people watch, and it's what we need to remind them. **cMr**

Reporter **Hap Freund** is executive director of The Santa Barbara Channels in Santa Barbara, CA.

Hap can be reached at hap@sbchannels.tv

“People often watch access channels when they are channel surfing and notice local issues and people.”

Mobilizing People Power for Local, State and Federal Change

Reporter **Melissa Matinz** is the administrative coordinator for Plymouth Area Community Television in Plymouth, MA. Melissa can be reached at mmatinzi@pactv.org

MODERATOR Sean McLaughlin began the session by saying that we all need to be aware of challenges to PEG access and prepared to network in our local communities and in our states. We need to focus on reaching out to potential media partners and empowering our voices by any means necessary. The chal-

lenge is that the complexity of the state and federal legislation can quickly overwhelm people.

Yolanda Hippensteele, Free Press, talked about the work of her organization to build coalitions at the national level, focusing on key policy goals relating to media ownership and broadband/internet access.

Gerry Lederer, TeleCommunity/Miller & Van Eaton PLLC, said that the two most important things we can do are to (1) understand our role in the community, and (2) inventory our assets, noting that our most important assets are the community members who use PEG access. He reminded us that this political debate is about protecting free speech and maintaining a community voice. He stressed the importance of writing letters to our constituents to keep them informed about challenges to their PEG access channels and support.

So, who are our allies? How would the loss of PEG channels and/or support affect the community? Would government meetings, election debates, high school football games, and church services no longer be carried on the local cable system? We need to ask our communities and constituents what they value most about PEG access. We need to ask our public officials if they trust corporations to run PEG access. And we need to take the initiative by holding town meetings and asking producers to cover these issues on their PEG access programs.

At the end of this session, we all realized that not once had we mentioned that we were outspent or outgunned by the competition, only that we need to become more aware of where we stand and how we can best communicate the impact of our contributions to the community. **CMR**

Alliance for Communications Democracy Fights to Preserve PEG access

It's been 18 years since the Alliance for Communications Democracy was formed in recognition of the need to strengthen the legal arm for public, educational and governmental access. Many of the founding members are still active today, pooling funds annually in order to participate in legal challenges to preserve PEG. All of the participating centers that are currently members are also active members of the Alliance.

Jim Horwood of Spiegel and McDiarmid and Joe Van Eaton of Miller and Van Eaton have served the organization throughout its existence as legal counsel with the support and assistance of their respective law firms. With guidance from Horwood and Van Eaton, ACD members regularly survey the legal landscape and determine where resources can be most meaningfully applied.

At the ACD annual meeting, Van Eaton explained the Verizon suit against Montgomery County, which includes a broad attack on PEG access. Verizon claims that the county's franchise requirements violate the First Amendment. The ACD voted to commit funds to fight this case. This year, the ACD also committed funds in Comcast vs. San Jose, another industry attempt to harm PEG access.



The ACD operates with a clear mandate and simple marching orders: Where the bad laws are, we go. As we say on our website (www.theacd.org), "If not us, who? If not now, when?"

Access centers around the country are welcome to join ACD and to help fund efforts in the courts to preserve PEG access. For information about the ACD, contact Barbara Popovic, ACD president and executive director of Chicago Access Network Television (312) 738-1400, bpopovic@cantv.org. Access organizations interested in membership are encouraged to contact ACD treasurer, Sam Behrend, executive director of Access Tucson at (520) 624-9833, sam@accesstucson.org.

New Equipment and Products Track Overview

THE NEW EQUIPMENT AND PRODUCTS track brought together a number of experts in the video industry to discuss trends in new equipment and products, and how to apply them to your center's operation. A regular theme of the workshops focused on transitions to digital technologies and the resulting change in production workflows, studio design, and communication platforms.

The first workshop, *How Do You Choose an Automation System?*, presented by Andrew Starks from Tightrope Media Systems, provided a structural framework for centers to use in evaluating and determining their needs for an automated playback system. According to Starks, centers should answer a basic set of questions to determine their center's workflow, current situation, and needs. Depending on the answers, the decision may be to use a tape-based system, a server-based solution, or a hybrid of the two.

The second session in the track, *Understanding Digital Technologies and Digital Production Workflow*, featured a panel of speakers: Van Duke, VideoTechnics; Rick Todd, Leightronix; and Rich Mavrogeanes, Vbrick Systems, Inc. The workshop covered a variety of topics, including how to leverage the combined advantages of digital and analog networks to provide multi-media content to local communities anywhere. Panelists also discussed the movement of video files and distribution of digital files, digital servers, media asset management, and archival of your media from ingestion through payout to archival and restoration. With an increased use of digital media workflows,

it is important to maintain metadata information for the proper management of those digital files.

The next set of workshops consisted of a two-part session on *Access Studio Design Considerations*, presented by Donald Berman, Peter Scott, Peter Zawadzki and Dennis Dutra. The presentation covered all aspects of designing an access studio, from working with boards of directors and executive directors to writing specs for security, electrical power and HVAC systems.

Andrew Starks then gave a presentation on *Advanced Web Design for Community Media Centers*. Starks' presentation included information about using cascading style sheets to create a good-looking site, automatically updating your playback schedule online, and streaming video content. The workshop was designed for people with basic knowledge who are looking to take that next step for their center's presence on the web.

The New Equipment and Products track closed out with a session on *Set Design and Building: How to Make the Most for Your Money*, presented by Steve Wachter, CTN Studios. Recognizing that many access programs are studio-based, Wachter presented attendees with information on set design and building basics for both high and low budget operations. Wachter identified the challenges facing access studios relating to storage, versatility of sets, and number of users, and offered advice on using paints, laminates, metal and lighting to make studio productions appear "high-end" and move beyond the basic curtain and plant backdrop. **CMR**

Track organizer **Matt Schuster** is channel manager at MetroTV, Louisville Metro Government in Louisville, KY.

Matt can be reached at Matt.Schuster@louisvilleky.gov

Conference Coverage Online

ACMBoston.org is a groundbreaking content management system website that includes the first-ever ACM national conference vlog. To learn about the effort behind the creation of this website, and some of the lessons learned, go to communitymediareview.org and follow the links to **Jason Daniels'** article in the CMR archive.

Community Media Center Management

Community Media Center Management Track Overview

Track organizer **Nancy Richard** is executive director of Plymouth Area Community Television in Plymouth, MA. Nancy can be reached at nrichard@pactv.org

PLANNING A MANAGEMENT TRACK for this year's conference was challenging, given all of the new legislation that could change the way centers are funded. The primary theme of the track was to help centers re-tool to make themselves less vulnerable to fluctuations in funding.

Most access centers, up to this point, have been supported by cable franchise revenues that come to them through contracts between municipalities and the cable providers. If there are changes in this funding due to federal or state legislation, how will this affect accounting practices? If access centers start for-profit organizations to generate additional revenues, will this endanger our nonprofit status? The answers to these questions are complex. From listening to the presenters at the *Accounting and Nonprofit Governance* workshop, led by Curtis Henderson, it seems that every community media center needs a good accountant. Any center, large or small, that raises or earns money for op-

erations or capital purchases needs professional help to understand the related tax and accounting issues. States attorneys general and the IRS are looking closely at nonprofit accounting practices now. If you make a mistake, you will probably be fined, and you could forfeit your nonprofit status. Enlisting the help of a qualified accountant with experience in fundraising and other means of funding could actually save you money in the long run, and help you avoid major legal problems.

In the *Human Resources* workshop, the participants talked about resources that managers can consult to make them better managers. Moderator Terry Duenas handed out a list of publications on management topics, and has uploaded, to the conference website, sample personnel policies for attendees to amend and implement for their own centers. If your center does not have personnel policies, the recommendation is to adopt policies from another center as a temporary stopgap, and then to amend after the fact, tailoring them to your particular center's needs. The reasoning for this is to make sure your center has sexual harassment and grievance policies, as well as a list of holidays and rules for compensation, in place and available to employees as soon as they are hired so that everyone has consistent information about expectations and legalities. Before you implement policies, make sure – whether you are borrowing them from another center or amending them for your center – that you have an attorney check them over.

The *Human Resources* workshop participants requested that the organizers of next year's conference include a workshop to help board members evaluate executive directors. Boards find this to be a difficult process, particularly when a board is not involved with the day-to-day management of an access center.

Copyright Issues Explained

What constitutes fair use? When may you use others' material in your work? In recent years, documentary makers have had an increasingly hard time getting rights to copyrighted material. Documentary makers have also had difficulty protecting their own work.

A coalition of documentary-making and media arts organizations, in cooperation with the Center for Social Media at American University, has created the Statement of Best Practices in Fair Use. This downloadable pamphlet advises media makers in the use and protection of copyrighted material and is available at www.centerforsocialmedia.org/fair-use.htm.

The authors encourage documentary makers to assert their fair use and free use rights, and clear up common misconceptions about fair use practices.

— Contributor **Jamie Ludwig** is a graduate student in Arts, Entertainment & Media Management at Columbia College Chicago, and is the assistant music editor for *ALARM* magazine.

The *Insurance Needs* workshop, which was the last session of the track, included a lively discussion about liability insurance, and what it does and does not cover. Rick Steddom and Chris Tobin of Driver Alliant, and Joe Balboni of Clippership Insurance Agency did a thorough job of explaining various types of insurance policies and how they work. I did not know that most insurance companies don't cover equipment stolen by a member of the organization who has checked the equipment out of the access facility. I figured anything

reported to the police as stolen was covered by insurance. Not so, say our experts. Since we literally hand out equipment to our members, equipment that is lost when a member fails to return it is generally not covered by the theft provision in our liability policies. Also, with new insurance industry restrictions on water and wind damage (thanks to the devastating hurricanes of the past few years), it's important that centers check their existing coverage to make sure they have the insurance they need in the event of a disaster. **CMR**

Boards That Work: Effective Community Leadership for Community Media Centers

BOARDS THAT WORK provided valuable information on "best practices" for creating and maintaining an effective board of directors. Presenters Laurie Cirivello and Rika Welsh stressed the importance of having board members understand their role as policymakers and introduced the key theme of the session: If your center is funded by public funding or franchise fees, your organization's priorities lie with the public trust, *not* your members singly. Your board, its structure, policies and priorities, should reflect this.

Various board structures for PEG centers were described, including elected, appointed and hybrid boards. The presenters recommended a hybrid board – a combination of board members elected by institutional members and appointed by the board itself, with designated seats for institutional partners – of a manageable size as the structure that is most often successful for PEG centers.

Conflict can occur when board members fail to understand and adhere to the policy that the board speaks with one voice. Conflict, debate and dissention may exist at board meetings as issues are being decided. Once, however, the board takes action and makes a decision, it becomes the "will of the board." In addition, the executive director must take direction from the decisions of the board as a whole, not from individual board members.

While boards of new or very small organizations may assign operational tasks to board members, as the organization matures and grows, board members must increasingly focus on their policy roles and leave the day-to-day work for staff. Conflicts are easier to avoid when the unique roles of staff and board are clear. This understanding is critical if boards are to operate in the "public trust."

The primary responsibilities of a board are fiscal accountability (which often includes fundraising), setting policy direction, building bridges into the community, hiring and evaluating the executive director, and evaluating its own work.

A functioning board must:

- Have a code of ethics or board contract signed by each board member (*see web resources listed below*);
- Clearly enumerate board and staff responsibilities;
- Set policies and function when not in crisis mode. Policies should not be developed in response to a specific threat or issue. Instead, policies developed early should guide your response;

Reporter **Laurie Cirivello** is executive director of the Grand Rapids Community Media Center in Grand Rapids, MI.

Laurie can be reached at laurie@grcmc.org

“Conflicts are easier to avoid when the unique roles of staff and board are clear.”

Working with Boards

Additional advice about working with boards is available on the conference website at acmboston.org. Resource materials can also be found at:

www.managementhelp.org

www.boardsource.org

www.compasspoint.org

- Recruit a professional facilitator to run retreat sessions;
- Develop a calendar of cyclical events showing key responsibilities such as when to do the budget and when to do evaluations; and
- Put a structure in place!

Once roles are understood, members must be given tools and support to succeed in their roles.

Ambassador training and the 3-minute story:

One of a board member's key roles is to be an ambassador for the organization. Providing board members with outcome-based examples of the center's work empowers them to build bridges within the community and effectively share the story of the organization. Stories are the tools of successful board members. At least once a month, board members need to know something good that they can be proud of and share with other people in the community. This type of board com-

munication is the responsibility of the executive director.

The board book

Each board member should have a binder containing by-laws, retreat outcomes, contact information and other pertinent documents.

The board development committee

This committee recruits potential board members, plans retreats, and engages the board in self-evaluation. The presenters agreed that this committee is one of the most critical to maintaining a strong board of directors.

Strategic planning

Key elements of strategic planning include: 1) planning the process or annual retreat to make the time worthwhile; 2) working in committees to maintain a strategic point of view and set multi-year objectives and priorities; and 3) continual board development. Who is going to be on the board to help you drive the vision and to thoughtfully consider questions such as: Why are we here? How do we use the mission as a jumping off point for where we're going? How are we interpreting our mission and how has it changed? **CMR**

“One of a board member's key roles is to be an ambassador for the organization.”

Diversifying Your Funding Sources

Reporter **Ron Cooper** is executive director of Access Sacramento in Sacramento, CA. Ron can be reached at rcooper444@aol.com

RON COOPER, executive director of Access Sacramento, advised access managers to diversify their funding sources and introduced himself along with three additional panel members, who offered a range of approaches to fundraising for PEG access: Margie Nicholson from Chicago, Steve Leonard from Rolla, Missouri, and Deborah Vinsel, from Olympia, Washington.

Margie Nicholson, professor in the Arts, Entertainment & Media Management Department at Columbia College Chicago, provided an overview of the environment for funding and stressed that

government support is critical for the existence of access. She gave examples of access funding success stories, ranging from Chicago Access Network Television's \$25,000 grant from the Illinois Arts Council, to Boston Neighborhood Network's ambitious new capital campaign with a goal of \$8 million, which is being raised through loans, grants and partnerships. She distinguished between earned income opportunities – such as fees for services or products – and contributed income from corporate and foundation grants, and individual contributions. She also provided participants with a list of



Ron Cooper

questions to consider before launching a fundraising campaign.

Leonard, president of Rolla Video Productions, introduced participants to *Your Town TV*. He shared his experience in developing community program production and playback on the public access channel without any funding from local government. He maintains that small, local businesses can be access' "best friend" and can provide financial support and production revenue to support access programs. Leonard gave a presentation showcasing the history of Rolla television and the business model that he used to invite the business community to befriend community television.

Vinsel, executive director of Thurston Community Television, described the opportunities and challenges of serving multiple communities with one PEG access center. Sometimes communities are too small to sustain their own individual PEG centers. These communities may not be served by commercial media and could be starved for professional production. Vinsel suggested that these communities should consider pooling their money to support a PEG access center. She emphasized that agreements between government entities need to be carefully thought through and that promises should be kept. She also outlined a formula to use in calculating the real cost of PEG access staff and equipment in the production of hired programming for government, educational, and nonprofit groups.

Cooper concluded the presentations with "The Big D of Access ... Diversify, Diversify, and Diversify." He stressed the following points:

1. Impress your local SUPER-constituents. Without the funding from franchise fees, most access organizations would go away. Local government officials need to know what you are doing with the funds. Keep them in the loop by sending them minutes from board meetings, newsletters, and letters of thanks from access advocates. Recruit your access producers and advocates to testify at community meetings and screen highlights of programs serving their particular constituents. Local government officials are the "Nielsen Family" of your community, providing the core funding for your organization. Keep them in mind all the time and with every decision you and your board members make!
2. Learn from other nonprofit organizations in your region. Ask them to partner with you in pursuing grants and highlight their events on your channel in return for coverage in their newsletters. Remember, they have years of experience with fundraising. We can learn from them!
3. Your constituents understand that there are expenses involved in providing public access. Some volunteers are financially strapped and need our assistance to participate, but not all of them. In many cases, series programmers are institutions such as churches, nonprofits, neighborhood groups, and they can call upon their groups to help out with the expense of producing and cablecasting their programs.



Deborah Vinsel

Access managers should consider charging a higher membership fee for producers who request a regular series time slot. For example, a regular membership fee of \$30 could



Steve Leonard

include up to one hour per month of airtime, and a membership fee of \$350 could be offered to producers who want a weekly, one-hour series with a regular day and time. This new pricing strategy has generated \$30,000 per year in new revenue for Access Sacramento. In conjunction with these rate increases, Access Sacramento permitted "enhanced underwriting acknowledgments" and encouraged individuals to seek business community help to pay for the higher series membership fees. Ninety percent of the series continued with limited complaints.

4. Don't surprise your volunteers with any sudden moves. All major fiscal changes need proper notice, public hearing(s), complete and transparent explanations, careful listening by staff and board members, and final decisions made "for the good of the organization." Each community is different, but if more money is needed to keep the center open or maintain services, the majority of your members will understand. Be decisive! Some members will complain but you must persist in order to "keep the doors open."

Leadership provides the fiscal stewardship needed for the organization to survive in tough times. The leadership required for major changes must be supplied by you and your board members. If you aren't convinced the action is warranted, your members won't be either. **cMR**

Policies for Access Corporations

Reporter **Ross Rowe** is the cable production coordinator, EGTV Channel 6 in Elk Grove Village, IL. Ross can be reached at rrowe@elkgrove.org

SPEAKERS PAUL BERG, executive director of NewTV in Newton, Massachusetts, and Joseph B. McDonough, Esq., MMTV, Melrose, Massachusetts, gave conference attendees a primer on media center management policy issues, including membership, disclaimers, controversial programming and policy enforcement in this session.

McDonough, also a board member of Melrose Access TV, covered the legal aspects of board member responsibilities in terms of setting operational policies and overseeing financial matters. McDonough stressed that the structure of board meetings is an important part of conducting a successful business, and that Robert's Rules of Order should be strictly enforced to provide a structure for making decisions and to insure that all members can contribute their ideas. He also advised board members to understand exactly what they are legally responsible for in terms of financial (income, rev-

enues, grants, debts, etc.) and operational activities.

Berg emphasized that equal enforcement of organizational policies by staff to all producers and volunteers was vital for the efficiency and vitality of the station, and provided examples of how this was accomplished. Controversial programming issues were also discussed, along with strategies for dealing with government officials and cable companies and their reactions to this type of programming. **cMR**

[Ed. Note: Robert's Rules of Order have lasted through ten print editions since their first publication in 1876. The most recent collection was released in 2000. A useful Robert's Rules of Order Motions Chart can be found at www.jimslaughter.com/robertsrules.htm.]

Ask the Lawyers

PANEL PARTICIPANTS: James Horwood, Spiegel & McDiarmid; Bill August, Epstein & August LLP; William H. Solomon; and Kohel Haver, Swider Medeiros Haver, LLP.

Question: What are the various negotiating positions that municipalities have been taking in talks with the cable companies and legislators?

Answer: The national local government organizations (NATOA, National League of Cities, U.S. Conference of Mayors, and National Association of Counties) have reached an agreement that they would not oppose the national franchising portion of H.R. 5252 on issues other than build-out. They made it clear that individual cities and municipalities would be free to bring up other, more individual, issues. The national organizations reserved the right to urge that language regarding “build-out” requirements be included in the legislation. In general, cities and municipalities have been very supportive of PEG provisions.

Question: Which legislation is better for a PEG organization, federal or state?

Answer: It depends entirely upon the state in which a PEG organization is located. H.R.5252, unlike House Bill 5252 in the House (the COPE bill) allows for a “Do No Harm” amendment providing for 1 percent of gross revenue, or what is now being received for PEG. This amendment does not limit the funding to capital – the money may also be used for operating expenses.

The federal legislation may very well be better than many statewide franchising laws. Pennsylvania’s proposed law, for example, has no provision for any specific money for PEG.

The panel urged PEG centers and citizens to be pro-active and write to their

local elected officials, including mayors, council persons, etc., expressing concerns with the federal legislation and including the statement – “We hope and expect you’ll be with us on this.”

Question: Is there any connection between the delays that we are experiencing in local franchise negotiations and what’s happening with the federal legislation?

Answer: Absolutely. The federal legislation is causing delays. The cable companies are waiting to see what is going to happen on the national level. The pending federal laws will not initially impact current franchise agreements, but as soon as a second provider comes into a community, the incumbent provider will most likely opt into the new laws.

Question: What does a PEG organization need to do to protect itself from lawsuits relating to the cablecasting of music performed in local events, for example, school concerts?

Answer: It is recommended that PEG centers look into obtaining licenses from ASCAP and BMI which would cover the cablecasting of concerts, etc. There are often relatively affordable licenses available from these organizations depending on the number of times the performance would be aired and the size of the community audience. Good rule of thumb: “Avoid the landmines.” **CMR**

Reporter **Cynthia Hahn** is with C-NET, State College, PA.

Cynthia can be reached at chahn@dejazzd.com

Cynthia compiled these notes with contributions from Jim Horwood and Barbara Popovic.

Digital Storytelling

Reporter **Greg Hiltz** is training coordinator at, Capital Community Television in Salem, OR. Greg can be reached at greg@cctvsalem.org



jesikah maria ross

DIGITAL STORYTELLING is a way to help members of the public turn their memories and their stories into video form. Digital stories are told from the point of view of the storytellers, using their photos and narrated in their own voices. In this session, jesikah maria ross from the Center for Digital Storytelling (CDS) described the work of her organization and advised participants on how to conduct a successful digital storytelling workshop.

CDS workshops start with a story circle in which all of the workshop participants get to know each other and begin to talk about their stories. Because the stories people want to tell are often very personal in nature, the story circle is a critical step in helping participants trust the facilitators. Then the workshop facilitators talk about scripting and how to tell stories verbally.

Next is a session of hands-on learning to familiarize participants with the equipment and software they will use to create their stories. Ross uses Adobe Photoshop or Photoshop elements for manipulating images, and Final Cut Pro, Adobe Premiere, or iMovie for editing. One of the participants suggested a Mac-based program called Photo-to-Movie, which provides good tools for adding motion to still images.

Participants are directed to create scripts of 400-500 words for their voice overs. Then workshop facilitators work with people individually to help them craft scripts that reflect their personalities and editorial preferences. Ross emphasized how powerful it is for a person's story to be told in her or his own voice.

Each story includes a series of photos provided by the storyteller. These photos need not always be "literal," said ross. A person might use metaphoric imagery to help convey emotion in addition, along with actual photos that illustrate story events. Project editing is kept fairly simple.

An average CDS digital storytelling workshop takes 8-10 days, but ross said it could be accomplished in fewer days if the sessions were longer. At the CDS, 8-12 people fill an average workshop, depending on how many staff members are available to facilitate.

Ross emphasized the advantages of collaborating with another organization in offering digital storytelling workshops. For example, a workshop could be planned by a media center in cooperation with a non-profit group. A representative from the nonprofit could recruit participants and help facilitate the sessions, making it even easier for participants to open up and share their personal stories through video. **cMr**

Peer-to-Peer Media Literacy: MNN's Youth Channel

Reporter **Lauren-Glenn Davitian** is the executive director of CCTV Center for Media and Democracy in Burlington, VT.

Lauren-Glenn can be reached at davitian@cctv.org

YOUNG PEOPLE between the ages of 8 and 18 are rapidly changing from media consumers into media producers. The proliferation of hand-held devices and online communities is creating a new generation of "millennial" content makers who greatly benefit from media education and literacy. Fortunately, there are community

access centers across the nation working to include young people in program development and leadership positions within their organizations. Manhattan Neighborhood Network's Youth Channel is a leader in serving youth, promoting media literacy, and broadcasting youth voices.

Andrew Lynn, MNN's education and development manager for Youth Voices joined with Youth Channel's lead trainer Derrick Dawkins and outreach coordinator Mariela Rosario to present their *Peer-to-Peer Media Literacy* workshop to a tightly packed room of community producers/program staff from across the country.

"Why is media literacy so important?", Lynn asked the audience at the beginning of the fast-paced, information-filled workshop. "Because

it is the environment young people find themselves in. And because we don't want them to simply produce bad versions of mainstream TV."

The Youth Channel is about "community building." A free, two-hour, introductory media literacy workshop is a key component of Youth Channel's outreach to youth-related organizations throughout Manhattan. Current community partners include the New York Public Library, New York Parks Department, Children's Aid Society, and the public schools. Youth Channel gets the word out about the media literacy workshops through a variety of listserves and networks – including the New York Collective of Radical Educators and MNN members.

The session at the Alliance conference focused on the key components of the media literacy workshop. Critical thinking is stressed as participants are asked to consider the context in which they consume media every day. Through a series of large and small group discussions, interactive activities, video clips and photographs, participants explore a range of issues, including: media advertising; ownership and content; media consolidation; identity and representation; and the central role media plays in democratic societies. Participants also learn about public access television and the growing youth media field. The short course may be followed by workshops in PSA production (seven sessions) and documentary production (ten sessions).



Andrew Lynn

The media literacy workshops are offered by Youth Channel's peer trainers. Dawkins explains: "I had doubts about the peer-to-peer model. But I learned by doing. Because we speak the language of

young people we gain their respect even though we are the same age. There are all kinds of ways that we can explain things without being strict."

The entire Youth Channel curriculum is generously made available at

www.youthchannel.org. The staff encourages all youth media trainers to be inventive and collaborative. As they outline in their web based materials: "We hope that these peer-training curricula are helpful to both new and old peer trainers as they try to share their skills, knowledge and passions with other young people. This curriculum is not to be viewed as a rigid schedule, timeline or set of activities that must be followed exactly. Please use, adapt, modify, change, or discard things as you see fit. As no two kids are the same, no two groups of kids are the same, and so no one curriculum can fit all of their needs and interests. We have created this curriculum with beginners in mind but you will need to modify to fit your students' age and experience, class size, equipment accessibility, space and time constraints. We recommend a ratio of no more than one peer trainer to eight students."

MNN's Youth Channel works with a variety of community-based media centers as part of the National Youth Media Access Project (NYMAP). Initiated by the MNN Youth Channel, NYMAP seeks to "nurture the right of free speech, to strengthen the much-needed presence of alternative and youth voices, and to connect young media makers from diverse backgrounds." The network develops audience and distribution opportunities for youth media and aims to build larger national media access opportunities for young people and their communities. **CMR**

Youth Media Resources

MNN's Youth Channel is at www.youthchannel.org, and Andrew Lynn, MNN-YC, can be reached at Andrew@mnny.org. Additional information about media organizations that are working with youth media can be found at www.freechild.org/Youth-MediaOrgs.htm. The National Youth Media Access Project (NYMAP) is at www.youthchannel.org/NYMAP.html.

Media Edge

In January 2005, a group of Sacramento residents – frustrated by the mainstream media's narrow range of opinions – stopped shouting at their TVs and did something about it. Three months later, *Media Edge* premiered on public access channels in Sacramento, Davis, West Sacramento and Nevada County.

The *Media Edge* creators envisioned a video magazine - two hours each week - that viewers could count on to showcase local and other progressive videos.

To learn more about *Media Edge*, go to communitymediareview.org and follow the links to **Randy VanDalsen's** article in the CMR archive.

Media, Civic Involvement and Community Development Track Overview

Track organizer
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THIS TRACK WAS ABOUT the best of a 30-year community media tradition – best practices in civic engagement, community discovery, and in using media to bring about social change. It was also a look forward along an uncertain path.

The message of this track was both inspiring and challenging. Inspiring because we've accomplished much in cities and towns across the country in using media to build community, educate and mobilize people around issues, and make a difference in the lives of real people. We've involved people in media making in profound ways and created legions of media literate, media-empowered people who speak up for themselves and are now visible in their communities.

Some workshops in this track, however, provoked concern because the fundamental model of access is evolving. The very nature of media is changing in profound ways as new generations redefine the way we relate to media and redefine media's role in our everyday life. What will all this mean?

Conclusions were clear: Going forward, we're still about civic involvement, community development and media democracy. But we have to be adaptive and responsive to a significantly changing media culture. The tradition of community media is rich and the opportunities for the future are exciting – if we can adapt to technological changes and come to understand the changing role of media in our culture and in our lives. **CMR**

Community Media Reaches Beyond Cable Television

Reporter **Melissa Matinz** is administrative coordinator, Plymouth Area Community Television in Plymouth, MA.

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LAUREN-GLENN DAVITIAN, CCTV Center for Media and Democracy, moderated this session with speakers Jason Crow, CCTV Cambridge; Scott Alumbaugh, Sea Dog Designs; Karen Toering, Reclaim the Media; Inja Coates, Media Tank; and Hannah Sassaman, Prometheus Radio Project.

The panelists at this session reminded participants that community media is bigger than just the local access station, advised participants to build relationships with other media organizations, and encouraged participants to see themselves as part of a movement to make social change happen.

Sassaman, Coates, and Toering each

discussed how their organizations work to support the local voice, how important it is for everyone to become more media literate, and how we all need to engage in conversations about media policy. Informing communities and reaching out to build relationships are important for the survival of PEG access. Advising constituents about how changes in media policies and legislation could directly affect them, and reminding them that the power to affect public policy change is in their hands, are critically important tasks for access managers.

Crow and Alumbaugh described the new technologies that centers are using to connect with their members, commu-

nities and partners. According to Crow, www.mediapolicyblog.org, a forum that was created to raise awareness of media policy issues, shows the power of collaborative networks. It's interactive, fosters dialogue, gives people useful information for organizing, and gets people involved to influence policy. A memorable quote from Crow was, "the collective genius is much stronger than the individual genius."

Alumbaugh talked about PEGspace (pegspace.org), whose aim is to bring the spirit and ideology of collaboration into the access movement using a content management system (CMS). Running a website with a content management sys-

tem encourages greater interactivity, provides a robust platform for the exchange of content, and makes it easier to develop an online community.

Access centers are a place where members of a community come to exchange ideas and thoughts and try to affect change on a local level. By harnessing the energy of our constituents and showing them how they can be involved in change beyond their own towns, we can create a national movement to return power to the people. By using the web and CMS sites, we can create new partnerships across our states and our country to protect what we treasure most: that the voice of the people be heard and respected. **CMR**

Evaluating the PEG Access Model of Community Media

MODERATOR KARI PETERSON set the stage for the discussion by saying that a changing landscape calls for a serious evaluation of community media. Technological developments, legislative efforts and cultural shifts are at the core of this assessment.

Elliot Margolies, past executive director of Mid-Peninsula Community Media Center, pointed out that many of us are engaged in using multiple mediums every day. We receive news and sports updates via e-mail and PDAs, listen to radio stations, and view websites for entertainment and other information. We have redistributed some of our TV time among other places, which provide the specific content we want. Margolies asked, "Does PEG content connect community?" and "What should a media center be for the public?" His answer was that media centers should focus on training and facilitating the production and distribution of good content. Engaging with the public and connecting with community organizations will benefit the community and result in greater participation.

Laurie Cirivello, executive director of Grand Rapids Community Media Center,

suggested that PEG stations, now and as we move into the internet world, should focus on knowing the community, responding to the community, crafting technological solutions, and imbedding community media into the community. In order to serve access producers and community organizations, it is essential that media centers become an integral part of what people already do.

For Richard Turner, executive director of Access Montgomery, basic First Amendment and democratic principles should always drive the vision and focus of PEG stations, especially as the media world evolves. Community media centers cannot lose sight of that foundation while responding to our on-demand, oversaturated culture. Exploring the "new school" approach of search engine optimization and disruptive technologies, as opposed to the "old school" mentality of bundled services and

Reporter **Jasmine White** is with Access Montgomery in Rockville, MD.

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"In order to serve access producers and community organizations, it is essential that media centers become an integral part of what people already do ..."

certifications, will sustain PEG stations as aggregators of content into the future.

Daniell Krawczyk, community media technology integration consultant, endorsed the idea of changing community expectations while building our centers to accommodate people, without sacrificing accountability. He thinks that the current PEG model is too hard; participatory media and citizen journalism should not be compromised because of the pain of paper-

work. The growing popularity of MySpace and YouTube show that people want to create their own content and control it, and they want the process to be easy.

All panelists agreed that growing beyond a cable-centric construct to include the internet is challenging but necessary as we move forward in a world of new and evolving media capabilities and expectations. **CMR**

Media Projects that Build Community

Reporter **Coralie Wilson** is the executive director of NSCC/ CTV in Roseville, MN.

Coralie can be reached at cwilson@ctv15.org

Iowa City's Channel 18 Demonstrates the Value of Public Access Television

Josh Goding, executive director of Iowa City's Public Access Television, told participants at the Alliance conference about the live community service programming carried on Channel 18 when a tornado struck the community on April 13.

"We were running the live show, and we realized we had the only footage in town," said Goding. "It was amazing that it was the only local coverage."

To learn more about Channel 18's coverage, go to communitymediareview.org and follow the links to **Josh Goding's** article in the CMR archive.

MEDIA PROJECTS CAN SERVE the needs of the communities and reinforce the value of community media, according to representatives from Access Tucson and the Community Media Center of Santa Rosa, California.

Laurie Cirivello, former director of the Community Media Center of Santa Rosa (CMC) and now director of Grand Rapids Community Media Center (GRCMC), said the first step is to ask, What do local organizations, like the schools and libraries, need? Then, help them achieve their goals. In an effort to help preserve the history of the city, the CMC began producing *Snapshots of Santa Rosa*, 3- to 5-minute pieces, in first-person with B-roll. These short videos quickly became a popular way to entertain and educate both long-time residents as well as newcomers about the community.

So, when the city began "Earthquake '06," a strategic planning effort to honor the centennial of the 1906 California earthquake (for which San Francisco gets most of the attention), as well as to prepare for future earthquake disasters, CMC was invited to participate. One of the objectives was to prepare neighborhoods to take care of themselves after a disaster until help arrives. The result was a DVD with five sections: a brief history of the 1906 earthquake; an explanation of the science of earthquakes; an architectural review of the buildings in the city; a description of what the city has done to prepare and what

it will be able to do in the event of a major earthquake; and advice about what neighborhoods need to do to prepare. The sections are tied together with excerpts from letters written by a Santa Rosa woman who survived the 1906 earthquake.

Cirivello then described a new project, *Common Threads*, in her new facility in Grand Rapids. The intent is, as a staff, to identify a community issue to explore over the course of a year, using as many of their media platforms as possible, including the public access channel, the radio station, the website and the theater that is GRCMC's new home.

Lisa Horner and Vicki Evans from Access Tucson said that the name of the game is survival, especially with the funding challenges they experienced after 2001. The facility is involved in several high-end studio productions, including *Local Matters* and *Government Connection*, as a way of providing a more visible service to the viewers. They are also covering community events and creating public service announcements. In addition, in an effort to quantify the service that Access Tucson is providing, they are trying to put a dollar value on the staffing and equipment involved in these productions.

The bottom line: all of the speakers emphasized that their productions significantly raised the profile of their facility in the community in a positive way, very important in this era of legislative and regulatory threats. **CMR**

Creating Community and Promoting Local Engagement

“MEDIA IS A POWERFUL FORCE in building community and affecting positive social change, from integrating immigrant communities to mobilizing HIV/AIDS workers to stimulating economic and community development.”

This description attracted participants who were interested in the collective experiences with both local and global communities. Moderator Chuck Sherwood of Community Media Visioning Partners began by citing a soon-to-be published book, *COMMUNITY MEDIA: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES*, in which numerous developing stories, case studies and examples of community media's future are presented. [Visit communitymediareview.org for accounts of how community media around the globe is used as a tool of engagement.]

Panelists from the greater Boston area provided invaluable examples from their work:

- Amy Cheung of the Asian Community Development Association discussed the Chinatown Youth Radio Project, where she has encouraged high-school aged students to become involved in discussing issues such as immigration, gentrification, class, development and the like. Most importantly, they overcame cultural conditioning by just speaking up about matters they cared about.

- Abiodun Shobowale, founder and producer/director of the Global African Independent Network (GAIN-TV) has been successfully running his television station, focusing on African/Caribbean culture, since 1996. He has worked particularly to get his audience members involved in their communities, encouraging them to register to vote and be part of sensitivity training.

- Oswald Neptune of the Haitian American Public Health Initiatives, headquartered in Mattapan, Massachusetts, also promoted the idea of civic engagement to his targeted communities, finding lots of interest in both music and historical programs.

Panelists also provided information about Our Media, Not Theirs (www.ourmedianet.org), a group that first met in Washington, D.C. in 2001 and most recently in Bangalore, India in 2005. The organization recently changed its name to Our Media/Nuestros Medios, to acknowledge its many Spanish-speaking members. The organization was formed “to collectively consider, debate, and find new ways to reaffirm and expand spaces for community participation and effective use of communication media in the context of an increasingly market-oriented and corporatized media and communication terrain globally.” Its core principles are:

1. All communities and collectives need to communicate, to express themselves, to inform and be informed, to dialogue with others, and to network. To have these communication needs met is the right of every community and collective. Every community and collective is entitled to the appropriate communication and information technologies and know-how to meet their historical communication needs.

2. The need to support people's struggle to reduce inequality and to broaden participation in the production and dissemination of information.

As growing disappointment and disillusionment with commercial media and its centralization by key multi-national corporations combines with increasing concern over conglomeration and hyper-commercialism, it behooves us to understand, appreciate, delineate, and be involved in our own local means of communication – especially now, as the U.S. Congress is considering new communications legislation.

Access, we continue to realize, is at the heart of democratic progress. The exciting thing is that we see better signs of access in global efforts at community creation around the world. **cMr**

Reporter **Linda K. Fuller** is professor of communications at Worcester State College, and has served on the board of the Wilbraham Public Access center since its inception.

Linda can be reached at lfuller@worcester.edu

[This is an excerpt of the original article. For the full text, go to communitymediareview.org and follow the links to Linda Fuller's article in the CMR archive.]

More Information

Recent publications on this topic include:

- John Downing, *RADICAL MEDIA: REBELLIOUS COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001;
- Chris Atton, *ALTERNATIVE MEDIA*, London: Sage, 2002;
- Nicholas W. Jankowski, *COMMUNITY MEDIA RESEARCH: A QUEST FOR THEORETICALLY-GROUNDED MODELS*, The Public 10 (2003), 1; and
- *COMMUNICATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE ANTHOLOGY: HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY READINGS* (2006), edited by Alfonso Gumucio-Dagron and Thomas Tufte (www.communicationforsocialchange.org/publications)

Being Public Media: Effective Models and Practices

Reporter **Martin Lucas** is a media fellow at the Center for Social Media.

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The Video

The Center for Social Media is making its video available as a continuing resource for community media centers. A web version is available on the Center's website, www.centerforsocialmedia.org. In addition, if anyone is interested in airing the show locally, the Center is hoping to make a broadcast version available via Digital Bicycle, digitalbicycle.org. Otherwise, contact Martin Lucas at mlucas@igc.org.

THE IDEA FOR THIS PANEL, sponsored by The Center for Social Media as part of the Future of Public Media Initiative, was to take a look at community engagement in different situations, profiling effective practices at a time when new technologies are generating both new forms of citizen participation, and new threats to cable access.

In addition, we decided to make a video that would help underline the themes developed in the panel, one that would help extend the dialog beyond the conference itself, and allow for a group that doesn't normally participate in ACM conferences – the actual community organizations – to include their point of view on the value of community media.

Research for the project involved consulting with veterans such as Lauren-Glenn Davitian, Elliot Margolies, and Barbara Popovic. Part of what they stressed was methodology: the need for assessment before jumping into action. The other point I heard repeated had to do with really listening to the community, taking a hard look at what groups really want and need from community media.

In order to really listen, we decided that both the panel and the video would have dual points-of-view. On the one hand, we would look from the station out to the community it is trying to reach; on the other, from the viewpoint of community groups, we would look back and see how community media might fit into their goals and aspirations.

The video profiles work at three stations. Brooklyn Community Access Television (BCAT) in Brooklyn and DCTV in Washington have both expanded their community outreach in the last few years. CAN-TV in Chicago had a large and successful outreach program of several years standing. CAN-TV also has a strong analysis of its role as part of the 'media ecosystem' of Chicago.

The video

In Chicago, I spoke with Greg Boozell, CAN-TV's technology director, about several issues: How can a center identify the key local issues to get involved in? What are the elements of an intelligent, integrated approach to civic engagement? How do you assess the value of your efforts?

Greg spoke about the need to be constantly asking who's missing? Which groups are not using access? Figuring out ways to find those 'missing communities' and getting them involved emerged as a key theme in several of the post-panel discussions at the ACM conference.

For a concrete example of CAN-TV's work, Greg suggested looking at how the San Lucas Workers Center used public access to promote fair play for temporary workers in the Humboldt Park neighborhood in Chicago. The San Lucas Center uses its program to empower leaders, document struggles, and help raise awareness throughout the city of the thousands stuck in a lifetime of 'temp work' in the Chicago area. [Ed. Note: An article about the San Lucas Workers is included in the *Community Media Review on Cultural Preservation and Diversity*, Autumn 2004.]

The other part of outreach is to ask why anyone would reach back? Why should an organization's media work be devoted to access video, as opposed to say, computer training, or PR work to get mainstream media coverage? For one part of the answer I went to Edgewood Terrace in Washington, D.C. and spoke with Jessica Venegas, director of community empowerment at Community Preservation and Development Corporation (CPDC) and CTCNet prizewinner.

Edgewood Terrace is a 752-unit development that has worked with Washington's DCTV, doing youth media training and participating in DCTV's community mayoral forums. Their development group, Community Preservation and Develop-

ment Corporation, a nonprofit leader in the affordable housing movement, has defined its mission as “Developing a vibrant community through innovation and partnerships.” These partners include everything from the Berkley School of Music to Microsoft to HUD. Here was a chance to take a look at the situation from the community point of view. Why did Edgewood Terrace take an interest in community media? How does this fit their long-range goals? What constitutes a good partnership?

Immigrant communities have historically used community media to very good effect, as several presentations at the conference suggested. Recent debates in Washington and demonstrations around the country suggest that immigrant communities have a stronger need than ever to get their message across.

To find out how new immigrant communities are using community media, we went to Brooklyn, where the Adelante Alliance, an immigrant group focusing on issues in the Mexican community, has taken up media tools and started learning how to make programs. Adelante Alliance has made a strong commitment to develop programming to empower the growing Mexican community in Brooklyn by actually going out and getting funding to purchase camera and editing equipment.

The panel

The panel featured presentations by Carlos Pareja, the director of training, education and community partnerships for BCAT, and Venegas of CPDC. Partnership was a key theme of this workshop.

Pareja mentioned several groups that BCAT is working with, including Statewide Task Force, a community organization that advocates for HIV education and resources for the Black and Latino communities. Task Force members have identified media as a key component of their advocacy work.

Pareja also spoke about how the current federal legislation threatening community media served as a catalyst for producers to get more involved with their community public access center. In Brooklyn, several groups have produced programming drawing attention to the harmful effects of this legislation. They have also testified before



Karla Quiñones and members of the Adelante Alliance edit their group's video "Awaken Your Conscience/Despierta Tu Consciencia" for Brooklyn Cable Access TV. The pilot for the series focused on immigrant experiences.

public land use hearings and demonstrated against the telecommunications giant, Verizon.

Venegas focused her comments on mission and partnership, particularly in the Edgewood Terrace neighborhood in Washington, D.C. Both technology and partnerships are evaluated for their benefits to the larger mission of building community in Edgewood Terrace. She noted that partnerships could start slowly and develop over the long term. She also made the point that no specific partnership is a panacea, saying, “You can end them if they don’t work.” The panel discussion about partnerships raised a lot of interest, particularly from media center board members who are looking for new sources of support.

Venegas also noted that the development of Edgewood Terrace’s local mayoral candidates forum emerged from several different threads of community building including voter registration drives, collaborations with DCTV on youth projects, and media literacy training. These separate threads came together in an event where youth and adult residents grilled mayoral candidates with tough questions about accountability. This notion of community media as part of an integrated vision of community empowerment and engagement is perhaps the most important lesson to emerge from this panel. **cMr**



San Lucas Workers Center Tour of Shame video profiled an action by the growing temp workers movement for a show on Chicago's CAN-TV.



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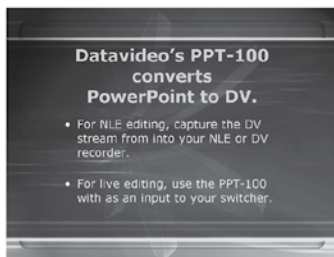
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